XIII

THE MACBETH PERIOD

T)ERHAPS Henry Irving and I might have gone on JT with Shakespeare to the end of the chapter if he had not been in such a hurry to produce " Macbeth."

We ought to have done " As You Like It" in 1888, or " The Tempest/' Henry thought of both these plays. He was much attracted by the part of Caliban in " The Tempest/' hut, he said, "the young lovers are everything, and where are we going to find them ? " He would have played Touchstone in " As You Like It," not Jacques, because Touchstone is in the vital part of the play.

He might have delayed both "Macbeth'' and "Henry VIII." He ought to have added to his list of Shakespearean productions " Julius Caesar," " King John," " As You Like It," ″ Antony and'^rCKcfpaira," "Richard II.," and "Timon of Athens." There %ere reasons "against," of course. In " Julius Caesar " h% "^ wanted to play Brutus. " That's the part for the actor,'£Ee said, ″ because it needs acting. But the actor-manager's part is Antony—Antony scores all along the line. Now when the actor and actor-manager fight in a play, and when there is no part for you in it, I think it's wiser to leave it alone.'[1]

Every one knows when the luck first began to turn against Henry Irving. It was in 1896 when he revived " Richard IIL" On the first night he went home, slipped